

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION AND YOU

Excerpted from the *Handbook for Conscientious Objectors*

CCCCO/An Agency for Military and Draft Counseling

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CONTENTS

Applying for Conscientious Objector Status	1
Religious Training and Belief	1
Supreme Court Definitions	3
Noncombatant or Civilian?	5
How Did You Become a CO?	5
Do You Really Believe It?	6
The Use of Force	8
The Political Objector	9
Selective Objection	10
Refusal to Register	11
The Unarmed Soldier	13

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CCCO/An Agency for Military and Draft Counseling was founded in 1948 as the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors. CCCO provides counseling and information to people facing the draft and to people in the military who need discharge or other legal help. It also seeks to reach people who have not enlisted to give them information on conscientious objection and military life.

Para. 7-1 also states that, "under combat conditions, medical means must be distributed in order to provide the greatest service to the greatest number. To devote a disproportionate amount of time and effort to one patient at the expense of the treatment of the majority is to subordinate the common welfare of many to one."

Even when casualties are evacuated from the combat zone to a field hospital or medical unit, "No patient is evacuated further to the rear than his physical condition warrants or the military situation requires. The evacuation policy of the command designates a maximum period of time during which patients may be retained for treatment within the command prior to being returned to duty."



The following is an excerpt from CCCO's HANDBOOK FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS, 12th Edition (1972). It has been updated to reflect changes in the draft law and the status of the draft.

APPLYING FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS

On April 18, 1972, the Selective Service System issued a revised version of the Special Form for Conscientious Objector (SSS Form 150). Although this form may be revised again in the future, it gives a good idea what kinds of questions the government will ask you if you decide to apply for CO status.

The 1972 form does not require you to state that you are a CO "by reason of religious training and belief." It acknowledges that your claim may be "based on moral or ethical beliefs, or beliefs which are commonly accepted as religious."

While draft board members will probably continue to be more understanding of traditional "religious" CO claims, an extremely wide variety of beliefs is recognized by the law as the basis for becoming a conscientious objector. Do not be discouraged from filing a CO claim because you think you do not have sufficient "religious training and belief."

RELIGIOUS TRAINING AND BELIEF

Section 6(j) of the Military Selective Service Act provides for recognition of conscientious objectors to war. It reads in part:

Nothing contained in this title shall . . . require any person to be subject to combatant training and service in the Armed Forces of the United States who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form. As used in this subsection, the term "religious training and belief" does not include essentially political, sociological, or philosophical views, or a merely personal moral code. Any person claiming exemption from combatant training and service because of such conscientious objection whose claim is sustained by the local board shall, if he is inducted into the Armed Forces under this title, be assigned to noncombatant service . . . or shall, if he is found to be conscientiously

opposed to participation in such noncombatant service, in lieu of induction, be ordered by his local board, subject to such regulations as the President may prescribe, to perform for a period equal to the period prescribed in section 4(b)[two years] . . . civilian work contributing to the maintenance of the national health, safety, or interest."

The draft law before 1967 defined religious training and belief as "a belief in a Supreme Being involving duties superior to those arising from any human relation." This is commonly called the "Supreme Being clause" and was inserted in 1948 in an effort to narrow the provision for COs. It was deleted in 1967.

Under two Supreme Court rulings (*U.S. v. Seeger*, 380 U.S. 163 [1965]; *Welsh v. U.S.*, 398 U.S. 333 [1970]), the phrase "religious training and belief" includes beliefs often thought of as moral or ethical in nature. The following discussion is intended to show how closely these concepts are related and to help you to answer Question 1 of Form 150: *Describe the beliefs which are the basis for your claim for classification as a conscientious objector.*

The *Oxford Universal Dictionary* defines religion as "devotion to some principle; strict fidelity or faithfulness; conscientiousness." On the other hand, "conscientiousness" is a synonym for "morality" in *Roget's Thesaurus*.

The views of Hillel, the great Jewish scholar, rabbi, and contemporary of Jesus, are summarized in the Jewish Encyclopedia thus: "Love of man was considered by Hillel as the kernel of the entire Jewish teaching. When a heathen who wished to become a Jew asked him for a summary of the Jewish religion in the most concise terms, Hillel said, 'What is hateful to thee, do not to thy fellow man: This is the whole law; the rest is mere commentary.'"

John Stuart Mill held that "the essence of religion . . . is the sense of unity with mankind." John Dewey believed that "any activity, pursued in behalf of an ideal and against an obstacle, and in spite of threats of personal loss because of conviction of its general and enduring value, is religious in quality."

Scientists have also contributed their share to this understanding of religion in terms of inner conviction expressing itself in the moral life. Albert Einstein spoke of a stage of religious experiences which he called cosmic religious feeling: "The religious geniuses of all ages have been distinguished by this kind of religious feeling, which knows no dogma and no God conceived in man's image; so there can be no church whose central teachings are based on it. Hence it is precisely among the heretics of every age that we find men who were filled with the highest kind of religious feeling, and were in many cases regarded by their contemporaries as atheists, sometimes also as saints." Sir Arthur

training as medical specialists. A few 1-A-0s with special aptitudes or experience may also receive such training. A medical specialist is often the direct supervisor of medical corpsmen, and among the things he is taught are basic knowledge of anatomy and physiology, as well as casualty evacuation and general principles of nursing. In any case, when all training is complete, the CO is sent on to a permanent station either in the U.S. or overseas. There is absolutely nothing in the regulations to prevent a CO from being sent to a war zone, and 1-A-0 medics were among the first draftees sent to Vietnam.

Mission of the Army Medical Service

"The Army Medical Service supports all elements of the Army and is primarily concerned with maintaining the health and fighting efficiency of the individual soldier."

This statement from Army Field Manual (FM) 8-10 (Medical Support, Theater of Operations, April, 1970, para. 2-1) is perfectly logical. The purpose of armies in combat is to win military victories. Every part of the military helps to do this. Some people accept noncombatant service thinking the medics are instruments of mercy. This idea can lead to serious personal problems and unhappiness. True, medics save lives and ease suffering. But the medic is a member of the armed forces, and the goal of the members is to win battles.

This point is made again and again in FM 8-10, which outlines the work of medics in combat areas. Saving lives and easing suffering are not even mentioned as part of the mission of the medics. The manual states, "The mission of the Army Medical Department in a theater of operations is to conserve the fighting strength of the Army by recommending, supervising, and implementing measures for safeguarding the health of the troops through effective medical care and treatment, rapid and orderly evacuation of the sick and wounded, and early return of patients to duty."

Injured soldiers are to be treated, not for their health, but for military necessity: "The objective of hospitalization is to return sick or injured personnel to duty as rapidly as possible. Because of their training and experience, they are the most valuable of all replacements."

When the available medical resources are limited, this consideration governs: "Since the objective of military medicine is to conserve trained manpower, medical resources must be employed to do the most good for the greatest number. When a wide disparity exists between requirements (i.e., the number of wounded) and available means (of caring for them), it may be necessary to favor those patients who can be returned to immediate duty, rather than those more seriously injured."

other assignment is acceptable to the individual concerned and does not require him to bear arms or be trained in their use.

The term "noncombatant training" shall mean any training which is not concerned with the study, use, or handling of arms or weapons. Department of Defense Directive 1300.6 states, "Service aboard an armed ship or aircraft or in a combat zone shall not be considered to be combatant duty unless the individual concerned is personally and directly involved in the operation of weapons."

Basic training for 1-A-0s is just as rigorous and full of military discipline as regular basic training. According to the Army Training Program for Modified Basic Training for Conscientious Objectors, "The objective of basic training is to develop a disciplined, highly motivated soldier who is physically conditioned and drilled in the fundamentals of soldiery." About the only real difference between modified and regular basic training is that 1-A-0s are not required to train with or use weapons. Included are classes on familiarization with military rank, saluting, marching, drill and ceremonies, physical training, radio communication procedures, map-reading and land navigation, basic first aid, Army intelligence, Geneva Convention, Code of Conduct, and Why We Fight Against Communism. Practical exercises are held to familiarize trainees with maneuvers under enemy observation and fire, camouflage and concealment, tactical marches, camping out, facing gas attacks, hand-to-hand combat (optional), and crossing streams on ropes, monkey bars, or logs. A great deal of time, of course, is spent in cleaning barracks, shining floors, and other training in spit-and-polish soldiering.

Following basic training, some 1-A-0s are sent to receive advanced individual training (AIT) as medics. The Army's ten week course consists of training for three related types of assignments: hospital orderly, dispensary attendant, field medic. Among skills taught are those of emergency medical treatment and symptom recognition. In addition to classroom instruction there are many hours of out-of-doors training in preparing splints, medical tentage, litter carrying techniques, man-carries, ambulance and helicopter loading of casualties, and various practical exercises. A good part of one week is devoted to learning how to administer injections.

After AIT

Only a few medics are COs. Many of those who are not had enlisted for the medical corps and after AIT will receive additional

Eddington said: "Rejection of creed is not inconsistent with being possessed by a living belief. We have no creed in science, but we are not lukewarm in our beliefs . . . in religion we are repelled by that confident theological doctrine which has settled for all generations just how the spiritual world is worked; but we need not turn aside from the measure of light that comes into our experience showing us a Way through the unseen world."

Consult almost any dictionary, and it is clear that the men quoted above could have conveyed the same thoughts in other language. *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*, for example, defines "ethic" as "a set of moral principles or values," and "moral" as "conforming to a standard of right behavior, sanctioned by or operative on one's conscience."

SUPREME COURT DEFINITIONS

The nearest we have to a legal definition of "religious training and belief" is found in the Supreme Court's decisions in *U.S. v. Seeger* and *Welsh v. U.S.*, even though in both cases it was the pre-1967 "Supreme Being clause" which was before the Court. In *Seeger* the Court ruled:

Under the 1940 Act it was necessary only to have a conviction based upon religious training and belief; we believe that is all that is required here. Within that phrase would come all sincere religious beliefs which are based upon a power or being, or upon faith, to which all else is subordinate or upon which all else is ultimately dependent. The test might be stated in these words: A sincere and meaningful belief which occupies in the life of its possessor a place parallel to that filled by the God of those admittedly qualifying for the exemption comes within the statutory definition.

The Court reiterated its position later in these words:

While the applicant's words may differ, the test is simple of application. It is essentially an objective one, namely, does the claimed belief occupy the same place in the life of the objector as an orthodox belief in God holds in the life of one clearly qualified for exemption? . . . In such an intensely personal area, of course, the claim of the registrant that his belief is an essential part of a religious faith must be given great weight.

The Court quoted the following:

"Ever since primordial days, numerous people have had a certain perception of that hidden power which hovers over the course of things and over the events that make up the lives of men; some have even come to know of a Supreme Being and Father. Religions in an advanced culture have been able to use more refined concepts and a more developed language in their struggle for an answer to man's religious questions." from the Schema of the Ecumenical Council of the Roman Catholic Church. "Instead of positing a personal God, whose existence man can neither prove nor disprove, the ethical concept is founded on human experience. It is anthropocentric, not theocentric. Religion, for all the various definitions that have been given of it, must surely mean the devotion of man to the highest ideal that he can conceive." David Saville Mulley, *Ethics as a Religion*.

In June, 1970, the Supreme Court went one logical step further, in *Welsh v. U.S.* Welsh had crossed out the word "religious" when signing the statement on Form 150 that he was a conscientious objector. He based his objection on what to him were "moral and ethical" grounds. The Supreme Court held that Welsh qualified for CO status, and reversed his conviction for having refused induction.

The Court seems to have felt that the difference between *Welsh* and *Seeger* was, at least in part, semantic. It said:

If an individual deeply and sincerely holds beliefs which are purely ethical or moral in source and content but which nevertheless impose upon him a duty of conscience to refrain from participating in any war at any time, those beliefs certainly occupy in the life of that individual "a place parallel to that filled by . . . God" in traditionally religious persons.

Thus the Court tied its holding to the earlier language of *Seeger*.

Had Welsh been able to accept any of the definitions of "religion" cited by the Court in *Seeger*, such as Mulley's "devotion of man to the highest ideal that he can conceive," he could have used the language of the law unaltered and probably would not have been obliged to battle all the way to the Supreme Court. The majority of the Court felt him to be the kind of sincere objector meant to be covered by its 1965 decision.

Perhaps one way to state the present requirement of "religious training and belief" would be this: To qualify one must feel a "duty of conscience" not to enter the armed forces. This belief may be based on "moral, ethical, or religious belief," according to the courts and Selective Service.

on failure to register for the draft begins to run when you reach age 26 and runs for five years. Thus, if you have remained in the United States and are not discovered until you reach age 31, you are safe from prosecution. Non-registrants are frequently discovered, however, when arrested for minor violations—such as traffic tickets—or when applying for jobs or seeking identification cards from state government agencies. If you are discovered, some judges will tend to deal more harshly with you than they would with a "public" resister, on the theory that the "public" resister is a person of conscience, and the "private" resister a "draft-dodger." You can help to protect yourself by preparing a statement of your position, including why you object to notifying the government of what you are doing, for use if you are discovered.

Before you decide whether to refuse to register, you should consider what you would do if you were faced with imprisonment. No one should violate the law assuming that he or she will not be prosecuted. Do you feel so strongly about your opposition to registration that you are willing to accept jail rather than register? That is the question you need to ask yourself. No one else can answer it. It is vital that you answer it now, before you face the threat of prison, rather than later.

THE UNARMED SOLDIER

On October 12, 1945, President Truman gave the Congressional Medal of Honor to Desmond T. Daws. Daws' citation, listing more than half a dozen acts of heroism on Guam, Leyte, and Okinawa said he had become a "symbol for outstanding gallantry throughout the 77th Infantry Division." As a member of the 307th Infantry Medical Detachment, PFC Daws had rescued 75 wounded men from the battlefields in Okinawa.

Daws was a noncombatant conscientious objector. Other unarmed soldiers have received medals for heroism, and COs as a group have received praise from officers and non-commissioned officers who have worked with them.

Training and Duties

Noncombatant duty for conscientious objectors in the armed forces was defined by the President in Executive Order No. 10028, dated 13 January 1949, as follows:

- a) service in any unit of the armed forces which is unarmed at all times;
- b) service in the medical department of any of the armed forces, wherever performed; or
- c) any other assignment the primary function of which does not require the use of arms in combat; provided that such

times beliefs which seem essentially the same to an outsider can cause one person to seek CO status and another to resist. In other cases, such as an objector whose position is not recognized by the law, the reason for one's resistance is clear. Some resisters reject CO status because it is a privilege not available to all; others would not qualify in any case. Some are conscientious objectors to conscription for any purpose, others only to conscription for military service, and still others only to participation in a war which seems to have no moral or political justification. But for whatever reasons a person violates the draft law, they should be deeply felt, in order for him or her to stand up to the consequences.

Draft resisters have helped to focus national attention on the negative impact of the draft on foreign policy, the generation gap, racial separation, the right to dissent, and the sense of alienation from government and its institutions felt by many young and old persons alike. Perhaps historians of the next generation will be able to place into perspective the various pressures which caused the end of the war in Vietnam, and of the draft.

Many non-registrants known to CCCO openly declared their inability to register and informed one or more of the following: 1) the local draft board with which they were expected to register; 2) the Attorney General in Washington, DC, or the national director of Selective Service; 3) the nearest U.S. Attorney; 4) the President of the United States.

An undetermined number of young men did not register, but made no public declaration on the grounds that no one is morally obligated to offer any cooperation whatever with conscription, or with his own arrest and imprisonment.

Some who objected to notifying government authorities, but still wanted to take a public stand, announced their stand by a news release or open letter to their local newspaper and/or other publications. This was also frequently done in conjunction with notifying the authorities.

The "public" non-registrant is clearly more likely to be discovered than is the "private" resister. In the past, non-registrants were given a second chance to register. If they again refused, prosecution would usually follow. The maximum penalty for violating the draft law is five years imprisonment and \$10,000 fine for each offense. Very few resisters, however, ever served more than two years in prison. In about half of draft cases before the courts at the end of the Vietnam era (1970-1973), resisters were sentenced to two years of alternative service under the supervision of the court. A draft conviction is a felony conviction, and the legal problems of convicted felons vary according to state law.

It is possible that, if you decide to take a "private" resistance position, you will never be discovered. The Statute of Limitations

NONCOMBATANT OR CIVILIAN?

The second question on Form 150 asks: *Will your beliefs permit you to serve in a position in the armed forces where the use of weapons is not required? If not, why?*

Under both draft and military law, there are two classifications for conscientious objectors: 1-A-0 and 1-0. If called, 1-A-0 objectors are assigned to noncombatant duty in the military, usually as medics; 1-0 objectors perform civilian alternative service instead of military duty. Most people applying for CO status today seek 1-0 status because they reason that any service in the military conflicts with their beliefs.

If you are applying for 1-A-0 status, you should ask yourself, "Am I confident I can serve without weapons as a full member of the armed forces without violating my beliefs?" If you are applying for 1-0 status, you should ask yourself, "Why does it violate my conscience to serve as a soldier who does not personally kill?" If you are not sure what your position is, read the last section of this leaflet, "The Unarmed Soldier." A good rule to follow is that, if you are not certain you could accept military training and duties, you should apply for 1-0 status. That is better than finding yourself in the military, unable to do what the authorities require you to do, and forced to apply for discharge.

The majority of 1-0s have performed alternative service in civilian hospitals. The vast majority of 1-A-0s serve in the Army Medical Corps, with many working in military hospitals. The fact that some 1-0s serve in veterans' hospitals—by their own choice—perhaps makes the line less sharp. What from your point of view is the difference? It is common for a 1-0 to be willing in principle to help anyone, but to refuse to don a military uniform. The uniform, for this objector, represents approval of both the methods and the objectives of the military. He or she cannot in conscience swear to obey all orders within a system which uses the impersonal destruction of men, women, and children as a method of obtaining its objectives, even if he or she personally killed no one.

But if your sole conscientious objection is to personally taking the life of another, your answer to this question will probably be "yes," and you would probably be given the 1-A-0 classification.

HOW DID YOU BECOME A CO?

The third question on Form 150 is particularly important. It reads: *Explain how you acquired the beliefs which are the basis of your claim.*

Although no mention is made of "training" in this question, it relates to that aspect of the "religious training and belief"

requirement in the Military Selective Service Act. "Training and belief" should be thought of as a single concept. In hearing an appeal from Fredrik P. Nissen, an alien CO seeking American citizenship, the U.S. District Court in Massachusetts ruled that "so far as Congress was thinking of training it regarded it as meaning no more than individual experience supporting belief; a mere background against which sincerity could be tested." (*In re Nissen*, 146 F.Supp. 361, 363 [D. Mass. 1956]).

Later, in another CO naturalization case, the U.S. District Court in Minnesota held that "no attempt is made in the statute to define training and belief as separate elements. The phrase is defined *in toto* as a single concept, and to attempt an independent consideration of the word training would be to ignore the apparent scheme of the statute." (*In re Hansen*, 148 F.Supp. 187, 190 [D. Minn. 1957]).

The official advice which follows this question on Form 150 is good advice: *Your answer may include such information as the influence of family members or other persons; religious training, if applicable; experiences at school; membership in organizations; books and readings which influenced you. You may wish to provide any other information which will help in explaining why you believe as you do.*

If, for example, you went to Sunday School, you should mention this even though you are no longer active in the church, for the experience influenced you at an impressionable age. Trace the development of your beliefs. If at any time you participated in voluntary or compulsory ROTC or Junior ROTC, make it clear, if it is true, that you were not a CO at that time. Do not shy away from mentioning negative experiences or activities which moved you toward becoming a CO. A great many people have ended up as COs because of their experiences in ROTC.

The suggestions in Question 3 should be considered carefully—even if you find, like many people, that you cannot pinpoint exactly when you began to formulate your objections to participation in war, or when you felt qualified for recognition as a CO. Neither the Selective Service Act nor the regulations require such self-knowledge.

DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE IT?

Questions 4, 5, and 6 on Form 150 overlap. You can answer them separately or together, whichever is easier for you.

Question 4 asks you to: *Explain what most clearly shows that your beliefs are deeply held.*

Selective Service often argues that you do not qualify for CO status if your beliefs are not "deeply held" enough. This is a

however, between the person who is sure he or she could participate in war under certain circumstances—such as a purely defensive war—and the person who honestly doesn't know where his or her conscience would lead in the future. The Court referred to:

... persons who oppose participating in all wars, but cannot say with complete certainty that their present convictions and existing state of mind are unalterable. See, e.g., *United States v. Owen*, 415 F.2d 383, 390 (CA 8 1969). Unwillingness to deny the possibility of a change of mind, in some hypothetical future circumstances, may be no more than humble good sense, casting no doubt on the claimant's present sincerity of belief.

It may be difficult to persuade draft boards, but a person who is now opposed to participation in war in any form cannot legally be denied CO status simply because he or she recognizes that in some future situation he or she might have a change of mind. The opposite has long been acknowledged: that a conscientious participant in war can change and become a conscientious objector. There are, of course, many kinds of selective objectors. Some will fight only when Allah commands, and Allah remains silent; some will fight only in Armageddon, which seems always to lie in the future; some would fight if there were no nuclear weapons, but there are; some would fight if certain theoretical criteria were met, but they can't be. In the meantime, these objectors may find themselves opposed to "war in any form," and can say so honestly.

Even objectors who cannot honestly say they are opposed to participation in war in any form should file CO claims if they want CO status. Any offensive words or phrases on Form 150 can be crossed out. A lenient board just might grant CO status. And using the full procedures provided reduces the complications of presenting a case in court.

REFUSAL TO REGISTER

Each year when the draft was active, a few men decided that they could not cooperate with conscription itself. They were called "non-cooperators" or "draft resisters." If a new draft registration is begun, refusal to register for the draft will be one of the choices open to you. It is important, in order for you to make your decision, for you to know why people have refused to register in the past and what may happen to you if you refuse to register.

There are many reasons why men did not cooperate with the draft in the past, just as there are many reasons for applying for conscientious objector status within the legal provisions. Some-

The political opinions of conscientious people rest on, and spring from, a value system. These underlying beliefs and concepts determine whether you qualify for CO status. Why do you favor peace candidates, or refuse to vote, or oppose the government's foreign policies, or support oppressed minorities, or pursue whatever political objectives you do? What do you think people's relationships to one another should be? What rights does a person have? Why? What obligations? Why? It is advisable to state what you believe, rather than what you do not.

Only if your *sole* basis for objecting is sociological, political, philosophical or merely a personal moral code are you prevented specifically from obtaining CO status. According to Selective Service, such beliefs are not "deeply held," and rest "solely upon consideration of policy, pragmatism or expediency." You can, however, request CO classification, file Form 150, and use the regular appeal procedures. Keep in mind, too, that you do not have to consider your own belief to be religious. If you prepare a CO claim based upon your deepest convictions, you may find that you qualify for recognition, even though you may not have thought that you did.

SELECTIVE OBJECTION

If you are conscientiously opposed to participation in a particular war, such as the Vietnam War, but are not opposed to "participation in war in any form," you do not qualify for recognition as a conscientious objector. This issue, however, is not as simple as the law makes it sound.

Although many people say they are opposed only to the war in Vietnam, presumably no one is in favor of all wars except that one. Most opponents of the Vietnam war would oppose all "aggressive wars" and perhaps all wars of military intervention. Under what circumstances would be conscientiously able to participate in war? Would you defend this country if it were attacked? Even if attacked as a direct result of its foreign policies? The German and Japanese people answered that question "yes," for the most part, three decades ago. Does the U.S. military establishment give us security, or threaten our security? Or is it a mixture? Do we face a real threat of invasion or domination? By whom? What national objectives justify the impersonal destruction of groups of fellow human beings? Are there any national objectives which would justify nuclear war? CCCO's leaflet, "Conscientious Objection and Disarmament" may be helpful on this last point.

In March, 1971, the Supreme Court ruled that "persons who object solely to participation in a particular war" are rightfully excluded from recognition as conscientious objectors (*Gillette v. U.S.*, 401 U.S. 437 [1971]). The Court clearly distinguished,

misreading of the law, but it can cause much confusion. Beginning with the *Welsh* case, the courts have held that a belief which is sincere is also deeply held. *Welsh*, for example, spoke of the "sincerity and depth" of one's convictions and of beliefs that are "deeply and sincerely" held, as if the two words meant the same thing.

The best way to answer this question is to use it as an opportunity to give your own evidence in favor of your claim. Anything which you have done which would show that you are sincere can fit under this question. For example, you may have refused to sign up for Junior ROTC, or told a military recruiter that you were not interested in enlisting. If your actions involved sacrifice on your part, they will be more impressive as evidence.

Question 5 asks: *Do your beliefs affect the type of work you will do to earn a living or the types of activity you participate in during nonworking hours?*

Like many COs, you may not know what you want to do as a career. But you may be able to say what your values will not permit you to do, and what type of work would fit with your beliefs. For instance, most COs would not work in a defense plant, and many feel that they should work in human services. Keep in mind, however, that people from all walks of life—law, medicine, assembly-line work, even boxing—have qualified as conscientious objectors.

If you are doing volunteer work for a peace group, that will be strong evidence in your favor. But your activities need not be directly related to peace for them to provide support for your claim. Do you help out at a local community center, or do tutoring, or volunteer work in a hospital? Activities like these can help your claim.

If you don't have much to say in answer to this question, don't worry. You have plenty of company. Many COs who are sincere in their beliefs do not spend a lot of time talking about their views, and most COs live ordinary lives. Conscientious objection, at bottom, is a matter of what you believe within yourself. But even the fact that you are applying for CO status, which is a kind of public stand, tends to show that you are sincere.

Question 6 asks you to: *Describe any specific actions or incidents in your life that show you believe as you do.*

Much of what you said in answer to Question 4 would also answer this question. You can use this question, however, to provide even more evidence of your own sincerity. Are you active with any anti-war, human rights, ecology, or religious groups? Have you attended anti-war meetings or participated in anti-war demonstrations? Have you signed petitions, written term papers, or letters to the editor? Engaged in bull sessions defending your beliefs?

Although all three of these questions are difficult to answer, keep in mind that very little you say in answer to them can actually hurt your claim. If you have participated in activities, like ROTC, which might cast doubt on your sincerity, be sure to explain their relation to your CO claim, either here or in answer to question 3. Most of what you might say, however, can only help you, not hurt. These questions give you a chance to present positive things which you have done and said. Be positive in your answers.

CCCO can provide you with a "conscientious objector card" which you can file with the Philadelphia CCCO office. If you file this card now, it will show that you were thinking about conscientious objection before the draft was breathing down your neck. This may also help to convince your local board that you are sincere.

THE USE OF FORCE

For twenty years COs were asked on Form 150, "Under what circumstances do you believe in the use of force?" The ambiguity of the term "force" obliged COs to give lengthy explanations of the difference between the force of gravity, the power of love, and the might of the military.

Local draft boards saw in the question the implication that COs ought to be complete pacifists who oppose violence in all human relationships. Many still believe all COs ought to be pacifists in that sense.

Individual Use of Force

While there is nothing in the law or regulations which requires one to embrace nonviolence on the personal level, local draft board members may continue to question CO claimants about what they would do in various hypothetical situations—for example, if attacked in a back alley. Even if you consider the questions irrelevant, you should give some thought to them. Sometimes it is good to admit that you do not see their relevance. While no one can say what they would do if someone tried to rape their grandmother, perhaps you can say what you hope you would do. Would you defend yourself or your neighbor's child if attacked? How? While courts have ruled that one can be willing to participate in a theocratic war and to defend oneself in the meantime, if you believe in self-defense as a right, you should be prepared to explain carefully why this is not inconsistent with your objection to war.

Police Force

While it no longer arises in answering Form 150, it is well to think about why, if you believe in a police force, you do not believe

in military force. Whether you believe in police force or not, you need to think about whether a police force is really the same as an army. Aldous Huxley suggests some differences:

The force which [armies] are empowered to use is not limited. Their function is not to restrain the guilty; it is to destroy all things and people within their range. When the police wish to arrest a criminal, they do not burn up a town in which he is living and kill or torture all its inhabitants. But this precisely is what an army does, particularly an army using modern weapons.

States arrogate to themselves the right not only to judge other states, but also, by means of their armies, to punish them. The principle is wholly repugnant to law; moreover the process of punishing a guilty nation entails the destruction of countless innocent individuals. An army with atomic and hydrogen bombs is not and cannot be a police force. Nor can its essentially evil and destructive functions be moralized by calling it a U.N. army, an instrument of collective security, etc. Police operate with the consent of the community which employs them. Armies operate at the order of one among the nations or the few nations which are allied together.

Again, there are those who disagree with the above, and consider the police to be basically an instrument of the "haves" of a given society to protect themselves and their property from the "have nots." Others see the police functioning almost solely to preserve the *status quo*, be it good or bad. But police and soldiers have also been used to impose change toward racial integration.

Need the police be armed? To what extent do police contribute to the level of violence in a community? When National Guardsmen are called in to quell a riot, are they functioning as police or soldiers? Would members of an armed international body under the United Nations be soldiers or police?

This is indeed an area beset with problems and uncertainties for thoughtful persons. One can take solace from the thought that most local draft board members see less connection between a police force and an army than do a good many CO applicants. And the statement you sign says that you are "opposed to participation in war in any form," with specific reference to the armed forces.

THE POLITICAL OBJECTOR

If you ordinarily put your objection to participation in war in political terms, you may have difficulty with the law's requirement that your claim be "religious" and that you object to "war in any form." The latter will be dealt with in the next section, but a word about the former may be useful.